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ABSTRACT

This paper briefly describes a project designed to provide for assessment, materials, and instruction for adult rural Oregon students reading at less than a fifth grade level. An overview is provided of the resulting curriculum guide, "C.A.R.E.-Challenging Adults to Read Effectively," which was intended for teachers, tutors, or paraprofessionals involved in developing an adult basic reading course, and the steps essential to the creation of an individualized program. The steps include: (1) creating a committee to determine the program's philosophy, goals, and instructional methods; (2) analyzing student needs; (3) developing a program to meet those needs; (4) keeping records of student progress; and (5) offering alternative methods of presenting information. Besides suggesting testing instruments, effective reading series, and additional reference materials, the "C.A.R.E." manual provides an easy-to-use format through frequent use of charts and other visual aids. A comprehensive description of methods of assessment, placement and instruction, the "C.A.R.E." manual can be an aid to any instructor attempting to achieve specific goals with basic readers. (Sample program materials are appended.) (MM)

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CHALLENGING ADULTS TO READ EFFECTIVELY

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CHALLENGING ADULTS TO READ EFFECTIVELY

Background

The act of learning to read is a complex process during which a meaningful interaction between the language of the reader and the language of the author is supposed to develop. Unfortunately, there are many people who do not develop that meaningful interaction between themselves and what is being read, thus demonstrating a disability in the act of learning to read. For these people the educator has the responsibility of selecting appropriate materials. This requires not blindly using a particular workbook or method, but rather, understanding the goal to be achieved and finding the appropriate means of attaining it. Due to the vast differences among adult learners, an individualized program, matched to the learning needs of each person, that utilizes the most relevant aspects of various instructional methods, may prove to be the most successful approach.

Purpose and Procedure

During the spring of 1982 the reading staff of Blue Mountain Community College's Adult Basic Education program participated in a state-funded project. The purpose of the project was to develop a program which provided for assessment, placement in materials, and instruction for rural Oregon students reading less than a fifth grade level. In addition, the project was to provide for the training of tutors to work with the basic reading students.

The project was developed in three phases: first, the critiquing and selecting of reading assessment devices; second, the critiquing and selecting of reading materials; and third, the development of the guide itself.

Results

1. The result of the project is a guide titled, C.A.R.E. - Challenging Adults to Read Effectively.
2. C.A.R.E. contains information which can be used as a reference in planning an appropriate program for basic reading students.
3. It is intended for the Adult Basic Education teacher faced with his/her first class, the tutor or paraprofessional, as well as the experienced teacher.
4. C.A.R.E. addresses itself to the objectives of a reading program, the diagnosis and remediation of reading skills, specialized remedial techniques, record keeping, readability, and teaching aids.
5. C.A.R.E.'s format, tabulated sections, permits quick access to specific areas of inquiry. Narratives are avoided and charts are used to list specific steps necessary to obtain specific goals.
6. The C.A.R.E. project, which has developed a program which provides for assessment, placement in materials, and instruction for basic reading students, can be an aid to those who are attempting to achieve specific goals with basic readers.

Challenging Adults to Read Effectively

Overview

According to a report published by the United States Department of Education (5), 53 million Americans are not proficient in meeting the educational requirements of everyday adult life. The ability to read lies at the heart of these requirements.

The act of learning to read is a complex process during which a meaningful interaction between the language of the reader and the language of the author is supposed to develop (3). Unfortunately, there are many people who do not develop that meaningful interaction between themselves and what is being read, thus demonstrating a disability in the act of learning to read (4). For these people the educator has the responsibility of selecting appropriate materials. This requires not blindly using a particular workbook or method, but rather, understanding the goal to be achieved and finding the appropriate means of attaining it (7).

Due to the vast differences among adult learners, an individual program, matched to the learning needs of each person, that utilizes the most relevant aspects of various instructional methods, may prove to be the most successful approach.

The purpose of this presentation is to provide information which will help in meeting the aforementioned needs. It will focus on the general steps necessary to

develop a reading program; demonstrate how to implement these steps; acquaint participants with materials and tests appropriate for adults reading at low levels; and provide an analysis of what the teaching guide C.A.R.E.: Challenging Adults to Read Effectively (a curriculum guide developed by the reading staff at Blue Mountain Community College) can offer adult educators (9).

Development of a Reading Program

The first step in developing a reading program is to form a committee. Members can be selected by the program director or can volunteer out of interest. A chairperson should be designated to coordinate the efforts of the committee. Responsibilities of the chairperson may include setting goals for the committee, the development of a timeline, and the formulation of strategies in which to accomplish those goals.

Step two involves the drafting of a statement of philosophy. This is where the committee's approach to the teaching of reading (phonics-skills, whole word, meaning, eclectic) as well as general program aims (...to provide personal satisfaction of learning through individual freedom, to experience adult learning opportunities...) are indicated. This statement will help set the course of direction for the reading program.

Next comes the establishment of goals and objectives for the program. What the program is to accomplish will be stated here. Reflected also will be the scope and sequence of the program.

Two excellent sources for program objectives include the Barbe Basic Reading Skills List (1) and any publisher's scope and sequence chart for an existing program.

C.A.R.E. categorizes goals and objectives in two levels: introductory and basic. The introductory stage includes readability levels zero through three. A

reader in this stage has inefficient word attack skills and the goal is to provide the adult with basic decoding and word recognition skills. Six objectives dealing with phonic analysis are emphasized.

The basic stage includes readability levels four through six. A reader in this stage possesses the basic skills necessary to phonetically decode words but is inconsistent in his/her use of them. The goal of this stage is to provide the adult with skills necessary to read and comprehend functional reading material and/or leisure material. Eleven objectives dealing with structural analysis, comprehension, life skills, and purposeful reading are presented.

Once it has been determined where the program will head, it is necessary to decide under what conditions the program will exist. Therefore, the fourth step in the development of the reading program is determining the program's orientation. It is here that the type of instructional setting (1-1, small group, classroom style), staff (trained instructors, tutors, volunteers), and nature of program (student or teacher centered) will be decided.

Now that the groundwork for the program has been formulated it is necessary to deal with the content of the program itself. A starting point would be the determination of student needs.

Proper testing is vital for an ABE program to operate efficiently. Since most adults come to ABE classes with a variety of reading problems, the diagnosis of skills is essential. The instructor must have an understanding of the student's strengths and weaknesses so that the student can be given meaningful materials with which to maintain or improve strength areas while remediating weak areas. So, step five in the development of a reading program is deciding how student needs will be assessed.

This step can be accomplished by previewing and critiquing testing devices. Devices to be critiqued can be obtained by writing to publishers and requesting

specific items, "cleaning out ones own closets", writing to or visiting other community colleges, and asking opinions of reading professors. The Dissemination Network for Adult Educators Newsletter (12) usually contains a listing of current devices and materials which may provide some help.

It is advantageous to critique each device systematically. Using structured forms (see figures 1 and 2) can provide organization to this process.

The committee preparing C.A.R.E. chose three instruments with which to assess student needs. The main device chosen was the Britton Informal Diagnostic Reading Instruments (2). This is an informal reading inventory consisting of a word recognition test, a phonic check test, and graded reading passages (complete with an adult component).

The Criterion Test of Basic Skills - Reading (8), a device to assess phonetic word attack skills, was selected as a back-up phonics instrument. The Task Assessment for Prescriptive Teaching (6), a criterion-referenced measure designed to identify academic and functional skills, was also chosen to be used when in-depth information on a specific skill is needed.

After determining what the student's needs are it is imperative to meet those needs. The sixth step in the development of a reading program, then, is remediation.

The task of teaching adults to read is often more complicated than teaching children. Most children are successful in their learning attempts due to the persistent efforts of the teacher, the motivation of the students, and the fact that ample time is available. A different situation exists for adults. Since they have not been successful in their attempts to learn to read, they are not typical learners. Most adults have demonstrated that they do not learn easily, at least in their efforts to gain meaning from printed symbols. Time is of essence since many need to learn to read in order to pursue immediate life goals. Also, many adults may be 'handicapped' by negative self-concepts, especially in relation to their ability to learn. It is

critical, therefore, that instruction be organized in a simple and logical manner and that it be adult oriented.

Like the previous step, this one can be accomplished by previewing and critiquing reading materials. It is advantageous to critique each device systematically. Figures 3 and 4 provide examples of structured forms which can aid in this process.

The C.A.R.E. committee chose the text Word Attack (11) and the EDL Reading Strategies (10) series as 'base programs' for the teaching of reading.

Word Attack - an audiotutorial program - reviews, presents, explains, and gives practice in both the oral and written word attack skills needed to pronounce and read unknown words. The approach is individualized and skills are presented through combined auditory, visual, and kinesthetic methods of instruction.

The EDL Reading Strategies program provides instruction and practice in essential comprehension skills in story context. There are six levels in the series serving reading levels 1.0-7.5. Comprehension skills instruction is provided by cassettes which are used in conjunction with student study guides.

Now it is time to place all the gathered information into a workable format. Step seven, delivery of services, serves this purpose. It is here that all the information obtained is organized allowing for systematic and consistent implementation.

The entire C.A.R.E. guide is an example of a delivery system. Its overall design permits for easy use. Tabulated sections permit quick access to specific areas of inquiry. Narratives are avoided and charts are used to list specific steps necessary to obtain specific goals. (Figures 5 and 6 provide the format adopted for presenting information on the diagnosis and remediation of reading skills.)

Once the program is in operation it will be necessary to keep accurate records of a student's work performance. This enables the instructor to determine if the methods and materials used are effective; it permits quick intervention if anything needs changed. Record keeping, step eight in the program's development, also gives the student a clear picture of how s/he is doing, especially when progress is gradual, but slow.

Many materials come complete with their own scoring sheets. It may be necessary, however, to develop forms specific to one's program needs. Besides one's own experiences, sources for ideas for forms include: method and material textbooks, adapting the forms that come with a material, writing to other community colleges, contacting a local school district or ESD office, and/or asking opinions of special education teachers.

Recording forms developed for C.A.R.E. include a reading assessment summary form, an ABE instructional plan, a tutor lesson plan, and a variety of daily recording forms.

Having an organized method of determining where one is coming from and where one is heading will help instructors and students become accountable.

Accountability also applies to the student who is not able to learn via "conventional" teaching methods. Providing for this student fulfills step nine.

Every reading program should have alternate means of presenting information. These should be easy to incorporate with existing materials and should not require a lot of special training or materials.

Specialized remedial techniques discussed in C.A.R.E. include the VAKT Approach, The Fernald Method, The Gillingham Approach (Slingerland and Recipe for Reading as adaptations), Neurological Impress Method, Glass Analysis and the Cloze Procedure.

The final step in developing a reading program is to continually review and evaluate the program, making recommendations and implementing necessary modifications.

C.A.R.E. - The Guide

C.A.R.E. is a guide which contains information that can be used as a reference in planning an appropriate program for basic reading students.

In addition to the features already mentioned, C.A.R.E. offers readability formulas (Fog Index and Fry Graph), a section on teaching aids, a glossary, and an appendix.

C.A.R.E. is very flexible in its use. It can function as a guide in setting up a new reading program or it can provide ideas for additions to existing programs to make them more efficient. The detailed summaries can act as references in providing information on tests and materials. C.A.R.E. is a time-saver. Several forms have been developed for delivery of services and for record keeping which can be implemented in existing programs with little or no adaptation.

The specific tests and materials listed can be used in individualized and small group settings. Programs which utilize a traditional classroom setting will find the materials highly appropriate but the testing devices a little more difficult to employ. Even if new materials are not needed, C.A.R.E. can still be of service to you because it can offer ideas on how to make the program's delivery of services more efficient.

Afterthought

We have discussed ten steps essential to the development of a reading program. Through C.A.R.E. we have discussed how these steps can be implemented.

There is no doubt that teaching adults is challenging. Unlike the child entering school for the first time, the adult has been through the system. S/He has had years of experience in living. Some experiences may have had a negative effect on him/her. Not only must the educator teach basic skills, but also enhance self-concepts. A

very postive-oriented atmosphere must be provided for learning. Given time and CARE the adult will eventually begin to attain his/her newly set goals.

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*NOTE: The C.A.R.E. Manual discussed in the paper is available from Patricia T. Amsberry, Blue Mountain Community College, P.O. Box 100, 2410 N.W. Carden, Pendleton, OR 97801. $4.00 per copy.

REVIEW AND EVALUATION FORM FOR READING MATERIALS/PROGRAMS

REVIEW CRITERIA	DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION	R & E COMMENTS

I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Title_____
B. Author(s)_____
C. Publisher_____
D. Address_____
E. Pub. Date_____ Cost_____
F. Major Emphasis_____

II. TARGET POPULATION

A. Objective(s) of material_____
B. Level Intended For_____
C. Deficit Area(s) Identified_____
D. Diagnostic/Prescriptive Use_____
E. Group/Individual Use_____
F. Student/Teacher Centered_____

III. PHYSICAL ASPECTS

A. Format_____
B. Durability_____
C. Teacher's Guide (Cost)_____
D. Other materials needed (media, etc.)_____
E. Motivation/Stimulation Value_____
F. Replacement of Parts (Cost)_____
G. Upkeep Considerations_____

REVIEW CRITERIA	DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION	R & E COMMENTS

IV. CONTENTS

A. Specific Items_____

B. Scope_____

C. Sequence_____

D. Behavioral Objectives_____

E. Useability_____

F. Assessment Devices_____

V. EVALUATION DATA

A. Field Test Data_____

B. Major Strengths:

C. Major Weaknesses:

VI. REVIEWER INFORMATION

A. Reviewer Name_____

B. Date_____

C. Time Spent in Reviewing_____

D. Has Reviewer Used Device?/Personal Comments_____

_____

E. Recommendations:

SAMPLE SUMMARY FORM

MATERIAL AND PUBLISHER / CHARACTERISTICS	SUITABILITY				READABILITY								EMPHASIS							FORMAT						APPROACH		
													Phonics															
	Elementary	Intermediate	High School	Adult	P, PP	1	2	3	4	5	6	7-Above	Synthetic (Skills)	Analytic (Whole word)	Eclectic	Language Exp.	Comprehension	Life Skills	High-Low	Workbook	Text	Paperback/Story	Conventional	Programmed	Consumable	Visual	Visual-Auditory	Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic-Tactile

FIGURE 2

REVIEW AND EVALUATION FORM FOR ASSESSMENT DEVICES

REVIEW CRITERIA	DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION	R & E COMMENTS
I. BASIC INFORMATION		
A. Title_____		
B. Author(s)_____		
C. Publisher_____		
D. Address_____		
E. Pub. Date_____ Cost_____		
F. Classification (Type)_____		
II. TARGET POPULATION		
A. Intended For_____		
B. Purpose_____		
III. PHYSICAL ASPECTS		
A. Format_____		
B. Additional Needed Materials_____		
C. Cost of Replacement of Parts_____		
IV. CONTENTS		
A. Major Areas Tested_____		
B. Scores Obtained_____		
C. Alternate Forms_____		

FIGURE 3

REVIEW CRITERIA	DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION	R & E COMMENTS

V. ADMINISTRATION

A. Given By_____

B. Training_____

C. Testing Time_____

D. Student Performance Timed/Amt._____

E. Scoring/Interp. Time_____

F. Ease of Interp._____

VI. CONSTRUCTION

A. Normed On_____

B. Reliability_____

C. Validity_____

VII. GENERAL EVALUATION DATA

A. Major Strengths

B. Major Weaknesses

VIII. REVIEWER INFORMATION

A. Reviewer Name_____ B. Date_____

C. Time Spent In Reviewing_____ D. Has Reviewer Used Device?/Personal Comments_____

E. Recommendations

SAMPLE SUMMARY FORM

TEST AND PUBLISHER / CHARACTERISTICS	EMPHASIS				TYPE								AREAS TESTED									SCORES OBTAINED						POPULATION						ADMIN.						CONSTR	
	Synthetic (Skills-phonics)	Analytic (whole word)	Process (Meaning)	Eclectic	Readiness	Norm Reference	Criterion Reference	Diagnostic	Achievement	Survey	IRI	Functional Living Skills	Auditory Skills	Visual Skills	Phonic Analysis	Structural Analysis	Silent Rdg. Comp.	Listening Comp.	Spelling	Sight Words	Survival Skills	Grade Equivalent	Age Equivalent	Mastery	Reading Level	Percentile	Stanine	Preschool	Primary	Intermediate	High School	Adult	Group	Individual	Teacher Adm.	Paraprof. Adm.	Psychologist Adm.	Time	Validity	Reliability

PURPOSE	STEPS	COMMENTS
I. STUDENT PREPARATION		
A. gain a rapport with the student	1. Discuss student's likes and dislikes. 2. Exchange information on each other. 3. Discuss why the student is at the program and how his/her participation in the program will benefit him/her.	
B. establish a non-threatening atmosphere	1. Avoid the word TEST; use words such as guides, inventory, placement check.	
C. prepare the student for the testing situation	1. Discuss the necessity of proper placement-being in the right course at the right level. 2. Explain exactly what each device is going to measure.	
II. THE TESTING SITUATION		
A. to determine a student's competency in recognizing and pronouncing or decoding words in isolation to determine the starting level for the informal reading inventory	1. Use materials from the Britton Informal Diagnostic Reading Instruments. Needed will be a Word Recognition Test Recording Form (pages 31-33) and the Graded Word Lists (pages 35-37). 2. The instructor will use the form on pages 31-33 to record student responses. 3. Directions for administration are found at the top of the recording form.	1. Approximate testing time is 5-10 minutes.

FIGURE 5

OBJECTIVE	BASIC PROGRAM	SUPPLEMENT	EXTENSION
B. irregularities	Pretest page 21 in WORD ATTACK		
1. c-s; g-j	WORD ATTACK pages 22-31		
2. consonants with several sounds (s= s, z)	WORD ATTACK pages 32-33		
3. unique pronunciation (ph= f; qu= kw)	WORD ATTACK pages 34-35		
4. silent (wr, kn, sc, gn, ps, pn, mb)	WORD ATTACK pages 35-38 Posttest pages 39-41 in WORD ATTACK ***		
C. blends	Pretest page 49 in WORD ATTACK		
1. s as first letter (sp, st, sk, sw, sn, sc, sm, sl)	WORD ATTACK pages 51, 55-58		
2. r as last letter (br, cr, dr, fr, gr, pr, tr, scr, str, spr)	WORD ATTACK page 52		

FIGURE 6